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Question of the Falkland Islands (Malvinas)

Letter dated 18 February 2011 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In accordance with instructions received from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, I have the honour to refer to the letter dated 4 January 2011 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Argentina addressed to you (A/65/683), transmitting in an annex a response to a letter from the Falkland Islands Government to the Chair of the Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee), circulated as document A/65/617.

The Government of the United Kingdom has no doubt about the sovereignty of the United Kingdom over the Falkland Islands and South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands, and their surrounding maritime areas.

The Government of the United Kingdom attaches great importance to the principle of and the right to self-determination as set out, respectively, in Article 1, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and in article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. Self-determination underlies our position on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands. There can be no negotiation on the sovereignty of the Falkland Islands unless and until such time as the Falkland Islanders so wish. They have made clear that they wish to remain British.

In line with our support for the Falkland Islanders' right to self-determination, we support the wish of the Falkland Islands Government to engage with the Special Political and Decolonization Committee of the General Assembly. For many years, therefore, the Falkland Islands Government has sent democratically elected members of its Legislative Assembly to speak before the Decolonization Committee.

The Government of the United Kingdom has not changed its position that the Decolonization Committee fails to take account of the way that the relationship between the United Kingdom and its Overseas Territories has been modernized in a way acceptable to both parties. Furthermore, it notes that resolutions adopted by the Committee on the Falkland Islands are still rooted in General Assembly resolution

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2065 (XX) of 1965. Since this resolution was adopted, factual inaccuracies have come to light which have not been taken into account in subsequent resolutions. The resolutions also fail to take full account of the Charter of the United Nations and the rights of the Falkland Islanders to freely determine their political status.

I should be grateful if you would circulate the text of the present letter as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 45.

(*Signed*) Mark **Lyall Grant**